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## Using emotion management for motivation in educational organisations: Construction of meaning, experiences and reflections

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### Abstract

Managerial practices may cause emotions, which initiate motivation or demotivation. It is crucial to examine this phenomenon within the context of educational organizations in order to understand how through influencing emotions managerial practices shape teachers' motivation at work. Data were collected through semi-structured interviews of 15 high school teachers who had more than ten years of work experience. Putting forward provides a critical perspective on emotions at educational management a discussion which is enhanced with incidences from findings on how emotions, motivation and managerial practices are intertwined at educational institutions.

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### 1. Introduction

When individuals open up and talk about their work, it is accompanied with associated emotions. These emotions include but are not limited to excitement, challenge, envy, stress, and anxiety. Managerial practices may result with emotions which initiate motivation or demotivation. The impact of emotions at work is evident from the existing literature. It is crucial to examine this phenomenon within the context of educational organizations in order to understand how through influencing emotions, managerial practices shape teachers' motivation at work.

### 2. Emotions and Emotion Management in Organizations

Hochschild's concept of emotion management has been significant in sociology because it frames "social nature of emotion" and evidences how "through processes of socialization (private emotion work), performed within different social roles (surface deep acting) and understood within social rules and norms (feeling rules) emotion management is learnt (Theodosius, 2006, p.893). Hochschild (1983) defined emotion as "bodily cooperation with an image, a thought, a memory – a cooperation of which the individual is aware" and emotion work as "an attempt to change quality or degree of an individual's emotion" (Hochschild, 1979, p.551). In the literature, we see an interchangeable use of "deep acting" and "emotion work" for emotion management. In this article, from this point forward, emotion management is used to refer to the particular phenomenon. Emotion management has been previously studied within the context of professions such as; supermarket clerks (Rafaeli & Sutton, 1989; Tolich, 1993), nurses (Bolton&Chain, 2000; Henderson, 2001), flight attendants (Hochschild, 1983). These studies focused on organizations where great deal of control of emotions is required. Due to their occupations, employees are required to interface with clients or customers (Callahan, 2000). Similar to these exemplars from the literature, examining this phenomenon within the context of education is promising given the human interaction involved.

Two major components about emotion management put forward by Hochschild's work are feeling rules and evocation; evocation is particularly discussed here. Evocation is when an individual attempts to put forward an emotion that is not present;

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vice versa is suppression. When an individual suppresses an emotion, s/he attempts to eliminate or hold back an emotion. Feeling rules, on the other hand, are socially shared but not thought about guidelines of how people attempt to feel in a certain way. So feeling rules present what an individual should feel in a given situation including how much a person should express an emotion and how long that emotion should be maintained (Callahan, 2000, p.249). It is evident from neurobiological work of more than hundred years revealed that in order to communicate meaning to others, to make decisions and to take actions emotion is a prerequisite (Damasio, 1994). It was also found that individuals try to hide any negative emotions associated with the organization. One example from the study evidenced that an employee supported a policy change in an organization although he did not believed or wanted it. (Callahan, 2000). Once employees start to mask their true feelings regarding the organization, consequences may affect organizational effectiveness negatively. (Gilley and Coffern, 1994). The visible, negative effect may not be immediate, however organizations certainly experience indirect or in some cases long-term effects. (Callahan, 2000). Fineman (1993) argues that organizational order can be “achieved or undone” through mobilization of emotions.

### 3. Motivation

In human resource management motivation has long been considered as a tool to manage employee performance to positive goals. It is an “energizer of behavior” (Reber & Reber, 2001, p.447) a propensity of an individual to expend effort at work (Heery & Noon, 2001, p.226). In order to understand human behavior, extrinsic and intrinsic factors were agreed to be crucial in motivation and performance management studies. (i.e.: Kelly, 1999; Kelley et al.2002; Herzberg, 1968). Self-belongingness, recognition and similar intrinsic rewards are more crucial when we examine emotion and emotion management in organizations as intrinsic motivation is caused by positive internal feelings which are the foci of this article (Kreitner & Knicki, 2004).

Albert Einstein described intrinsic motivation as; “the enjoyment of seeing and searching” (Amabile, 1999, p.80). When we examine the literature on motivation at work, it is evident that employees who are happier at their work place are more motivated to perform better (Herzberg, 1968; Kelley et al.2002). Although there are number of theories suggesting various applications of motivational models (e.g.: Maslow, 1943; Herzberg, 1968; Adams, 1976), it is undeniable that employee response can vary across cultures and professions. Therefore, it is crucial to be fully aware of the context and organizational culture before applying emotion management in educational institutions.

The Model of Intrinsic Motivation, which is a more recent model of motivation proposed by Thomas (2002), suggests that there are four dimensions of intrinsic rewards and an intrinsic motivation of an individual is the directly dependent on the extent of their experience of the proposed four dimensions. Thomas (2002) argues that if managers can learn to lead the “essential ingredients” of intrinsic motivation, then employees’ motivation can increase due to increased intrinsic rewards they will experience. (Thomas, 2002). The four dimensions of intrinsic motivation that managers need to learn to manage are choice, meaningfulness, competence and progress. The most relevant ones to this study are choice and meaningfulness. Leading for choice is concerned with employee empowerment and delegation of important tasks. Leading for meaningfulness, on the other hand, is about manager employee relationship where manager is an inspiring role model who shows desired behaviors. Once employees form the link between the organization they work in and their job, they become more motivated, productive and engaged; this happens because of the sense of purpose created as a result of the association. Thomas (2002) also argues that providing positive feedback and acknowledging effort are very crucial, in initiating intrinsic motivation of employees.

This study investigates emotion management and its implications of teacher motivation through individual narratives of 15 high school teachers of North Cyprus. It attempts to answer the question of “how emotions created by the administrative practices influence high school teachers’ motivation at school?”

### 4. Research Methodology

Through critical discussion of emotion and motivation literatures, this research looks into narratives of 15 high school teachers from North Cyprus who had more than ten years of work experience. Data were collected through semi-structured interviews in order to have a certain level of consistency and to allow participants to express their stories without confinement. Teachers’ responses were examined through narrative analysis with a social constructionist perspective.

Table 1.Details of Participants and Assigned Codes

Participant Number	Gender	Subject Taught	Years of Experience	Assigned Code
Participant 1	Female	English	19	P1F
Participant 2	Female	History	15	P2F
Participant 3	Male	Literature	17	P3M
Participant 4	Female	English	17	P4F
Participant 5	Female	Counselor	14	P5F
Participant 6	Male	Chemistry	15	P6M
Participant 7	Female	Literature	22	P7F
Participant 8	Female	Biology	16	P8F
Participant 9	Female	Mathematics	18	P9F
Participant 10	Male	Physics	23	P10M
Participant 11	Male	P.E.	18	P11M
Participant 12	Female	Psychology	12	P12F
Participant 13	Female	Biology	20	P13F
Participant 14	Male	Geography	24	P14M
Participant 15	Female	History	21	P15F

The reason why participant details include gender is to see if there is any evidence of a particular practice to lead to a different emotion across different genders. Of course, it is acknowledged in this study that given its research design and sample size, it is not possible to generalize the results or make any claims on implications based on the results; nevertheless it is argued that due to its qualitative nature and use of narrative analysis, the results provide rich examples and promising in-depth understanding of daily practices which leads to certain emotions which directly affect intrinsic motivation of teachers. Collected data were transferred to QSR-Nvivo for ease of analysis. Narratives were used to reflect participant experiences and views. This method was chosen as narrative analysis assumes that people communicate mainly through their stories and examining individual stories may help to uncover their priorities, interpretations and experiences (Boje, 2000).

## 5. Findings and Analysis

Data analysis provided number of emotions, where two of them are discussed here. Two emotions that were common among participants that have positive effect on motivation are trust and sense of belongingness. Data suggested that they are intertwined in terms of emotions they create and the way teachers feel motivated. When they are empowered, teachers confirmed that they felt trusted, or vice versa, when they felt that they were trusted, they took more initiative and felt sense of belongingness towards the organization. This confirms that motivation is positively affected by emotions associated with belongingness and trust.

Table 2.Emotions Emerged from Data

Emotions	Quotes from Participants
Trust	<p>P12F: Before a decision was made about students, principal called me and asked for my opinion about the issue. It made me feel valued and trusted. So, I trust him too. When my opinion is asked, I feel motivated.</p> <p>P2F: For me an administrator should be consistent and fair to everyone. If there is someone who does not do his or her job properly should get punishment and someone who performs well should get a reward even if it is only in the form of verbal acknowledgement. This type of attitude maintains trust within organization.</p> <p>P13F: Him being at school at all times and the way he dresses makes me trust him and motivates me to I volunteer for responsibilities.</p>
Belongingness	<p>P7F: After an event, principal came and congratulated all of us for our success. We really liked it. I felt proud to be part of that group.</p> <p>P6M: When we successfully participate in a competition, or if we take on a responsibility in our end of year show we receive flowers, plaque, certificate and the like. This makes us feel valued and creates positive effect on us.</p>

It is evident from quotes that when teachers are involved in the decision making process, they feel trusted and this also increases the motivation to perform better. Teachers discussed that when they are empowered and given responsibilities they feel trusted; this type of action of administration encourages them to feel sense of ownership and trust the administration more. It is also discussed by many that fairness, consistency and being a good role model are all important in the way they trust their administration and they feel sense of ownership at work. As Thomas (2002) argues once managers learn how to manage intrinsic motivation elements, the motivation will increase. Results also support this argument, that any kind of acknowledgement of teachers' positive input results in increased sense of belongingness thus increased motivation. Gender is not a determinant on how teachers feel towards their schools or administrators.

## 6. Conclusion

It is concluded from this study that if an administration manages to delegate responsibilities and acknowledges positive or negative performances, employee's level of trust and sense of belongingness increases. Positive emotions associated with being trusted, feeling the sense of ownership of the institution that they work at and feeling trust towards their administrators, if managed well by the administrators can result in increased employee motivation. Due to its nature, education is an occupation that requires emotion management. This is also valid for teachers. In certain situations they might need to manage their feelings such as anger, stress, or mistrust due to their obligations towards their students. In the long run, this may result in unhappiness and losing sense of belongingness thus lower motivation and student experience. It is crucial for administrators to acknowledge the importance of emotions in occupations such as teaching. Seeking ways to increase trust at workplace and sense of belongingness through empowerment and well-received performance management system, higher motivation can be achieved.

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